

Mischief in the Making

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****This was my first romp into the land of Harry Potter fanfiction. I think I've improved since then, but you can decide for yourself.****

****The Latin I've used in this fic for the spells isn't stellar, but I gave it a try and I'm by no way a Latin scholar. If you know for a fact that I've made a mistake, tell me and I'll change it. ****

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><p>"I'm bored," Sirius Black announced, flopping over on his side.<p>

Remus Lupin suppressed a shiver. Those two innocent-sounding words were almost always the prelude to one of their escapades. Those two words signaled the beginning of adventure, of danger, of close hits and of near misses. And, above all, those two words told Remus that they would most likely be faced with detention before the day was done.

Remus and Sirius, along with their friends James Potter and Peter Pettigrew, were attending Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. All four of them were in their sixth year. It was Christmas holidays

and, quite frankly, it wasn't just Sirius who was bored.

Lily, James' girlfriend, had gone home for the Christmas break. They had been spending a lot of time together this last year and James was missing her sorely.

Aria Bone, a seventh-year Ravenclaw whom Sirius was currently seeing, had also gone home for Christmas, leaving Sirius alone and bored. And when Sirius got bored, people, usually Sirius, James, Remus and Peter, got in trouble.

Remus and Peter were also at a loss to what to do. Neither of them liked it any more than their friends. The full moon wasn't for another two and a half weeks, so there was no point in even planning their next adventure under it.

The four of them were in the Gryffindor common room, all sprawled across various pieces of furniture. In front of them was the fireplace, a roaring fire alight within to keep out the winter's bitter cold. Other than them, the common room was devoid of all people. Most people had opted to spend the Christmas holidays at home with their families this year.

Suddenly Sirius sat up straight, a grin playing across his face. "I know," he said. "We can go exploring. Find a new hidden passageway."

"Give it up, Padfoot," James drawled, too lazy to even sit up and look at his friend. Padfoot was Sirius' nickname. "We haven't found a new one in months. I think we know where all of them are now."

Sirius waved that comment aside. "We can't know all of them. There has to be some more out there that we haven't found yet."

"And where do you suggest we look?" James asked. "We've torn every room in this castle apart."

"Well, there's . . . " Sirius hesitated, searching his mind for a place they hadn't already looked in. He slumped back in his chair, defeated.

"Told you so," James said.

"There's got to be something we can do," Sirius said in frustration.

"We can always use James' cloak to sneak down to the kitchen to get something to eat," Peter offered.

Remus rolled his eyes. Peter was always thinking with his stomach.

Evidently great minds think alike, for Sirius, sounding disgusted, answered that. "We just ate half an hour ago! Honestly, Wormtail, can you not go for five minutes without thinking of food?"

"Well, we have to think of something," James said. "It's no fun just lying around here all day."

"I thought of something," Sirius grumbled. "You just didn't want to do it."

"Sirius - " James gave a long suffering sigh, "even you've admitted we know Hogwarts like the back of our hands. It's all up here." He tapped his head.

"That's it!" Sirius exclaimed. He shot up straight in his chair.

"What's it?" Jams asked, also sitting up. He, too, looked excited. He could tell that Sirius had an idea.

Remus was curious. After all, he was as bored as the others. He leaned in closer. "What is it, Padfoot?"

"We can make a map of Hogwarts!"

"There're already plenty of those," Peter objected. "Why would we want to do something like that?"

Sirius rolled his eyes in an exaggerated motion. "Not just any old map, a magical map, with all the secret passageways and hidden rooms marked on it."

"And all the people in the castle marked on it," James said, catching on to Sirius' excitement.

"And it'll insult anyone who tries to read it." This was, no surprise, Sirius' idea.

"Without the password, of course" added James.

"Of course," Remus said dryly.

Once again it looked like it would be up to him to be the voice of reason. He could count on James, unless Prongs had been caught up in one of Sirius' hair-brained schemes, as it was in this case. Then Remus just wrote the prefect off as a lost cause. Peter never stood up to any of them; Remus wasn't even sure if he was able to have an opinion that differed from James'. And Sirius, well, it was Sirius' ideas in the first place, ninety-nine out of a hundred times. So that left Remus.

"Exactly how are we going to do this?" Remus continued, playing devil's advocate. He was just as excited as the rest of them about it, but he knew that if they didn't think it through logically, it would be a disaster.

James immediately settled down. Remus could almost see the wheels in his head turning. "Well, the library's always a good place to start. I know there are books on the making of maps in there."

"Restricted or non-restricted?" Remus inquired.

"Non-restricted," James told him. "Though if we can't find something, you know the drill."

Remus, Sirius and Peter nodded, although Peter looked slightly ill. They had taken books from the restricted section before, when they

were trying to become Animagi a couple of years back.

"An _ invisibilis invocare _ spell should take care of the invisible part," Remus mused. "It won't allow anyone to see it unless they utter a certain phrase. And it will erase itself when the person is finished with it by saying another phrase."

"Erase itself?" said Peter, alarmed. "We don't want to erase it. Not after all that work."

Sirius snorted while James said soothingly, "It doesn't really erase itself, Peter, it just becomes invisible again."

"Oh," Peter said, mollified.

"And we can place a simple Insulting Charm on it so people who try to use it without knowing how will be insulted," Sirius finished.

Remus thought it over. It seemed sound, but the only way to know for sure would be to try it out themselves.

James had come to the same conclusion. "Can't think of anything else," he said.

"Then what are we waiting for?" Sirius asked, jumping up. "To the library," he proclaimed dramatically before taking off at full speed.

"If only he approached his school work with half so much excitement," Remus mock lamented.

James just grinned. "Then he'd do better in school than both of us put together, Moony. C'mon." He motioned for Remus and Peter to follow him, then he, too, started running towards the library after Sirius.

Madame Weiser, the librarian, greeted the four boys with a glare and a loud "shh" when they tumbled into the library a few minutes later. She immediately turned back to her work, therefore missing the faces Sirius made at her.

James pulled Sirius away before Madame Weiser could look up and see him. "We're here for a reason," he hissed, "and it doesn't include getting detention for something as childish and stupid as that."

Sirius looked abashed for about a second, although Remus realized that he might have been a little bit optimistic about his friends sense of shame when Sirius grinned again. "No sense in getting in trouble for anything less than the map," he cheerfully agreed.

They researched for the rest of the afternoon. It wouldn't be too hard, certainly much easier than many things they had done together at Hogwarts. The project kept them occupied for the rest of the break. There weren't any midnight raids, much to Sirius' disappointment and Peter's great relief.

Classes were starting the next day. Hogwarts Express had just brought the students back to school. They were piling into the Gryffindor common room, exchanging stories and comparing Christmas

presents.

Lily came over to sit beside James. "Hey you guys," she said.

James looked up from where they were putting the final touches on the map. His eyes lit up when he saw his girlfriend. "Lily!" he exclaimed.

He kissed her. Remus smiled indulgently while Sirius made gagging noises.

"Shut up, Sirius," Lily said good-naturedly. "You're just upset because you haven't seen Aria yet."

"Yeah," Sirius agreed. "I should probably go see her. But . . . " he looked helplessly at the map on the table and Remus knew he was torn between seeing her girlfriend again and helping finish the map.

"Go on, Padfoot," James said with a wave of his hand. "We'll wait for you to finish off."

"Thanks, Prongs!" With his trademark grin, Sirius was up and running to meet Aria.

"What is that?" Lily asked, looking with undisguised curiosity at the map on the table. At that moment it looked like a plain piece of parchment. Everything was finished except for the Insulting Charm Sirius insisted had to be added. Not that any of them were arguing with him about it, though.

"That's a secret," Peter announced in a lofty manner.

Lily looked at James. The prefect seemed uncomfortable. "Sorry, Lily," he apologized. "You'll just have to wait and see."

Lily gave him a look causing James to wince slightly. Remus knew he would be regretting that later.

"We want to make sure it works before we show or tell anyone," Remus said, trying to smooth things over.

"You'll be the first one we show," James promised.

Lily looked appeased. "Okay, then. When will that be?"

"Later tonight, probably. Most likely," James told her.

"Okay. Until then, since you can't do anything until Sirius comes back, why don't we catch up on what happened over the break?" She gave Remus and Peter a meaningful look.

Remus took the hint right away. He stood up. "We should get going," he announced. He knew it sounded lame, but he also knew neither Lily nor James cared.

"We should?" Peter asked, dumbly.

"Yes," Remus repeated, "we should." He yanked Peter up and none-too-gently pulled him away.

"What was that for?" Peter complained.

"Idiot," Remus said. "Lily and James wanted some time alone."

"I don't see why they should kick us out," Peter grumbled. "It's not like they own the place or something."

Remus didn't answer. Instead he sighed and asked, "Do you want to play chess?"

* * *

><p>It was after dinner. James, Sirius, Remus and Peter had finished putting the last touches on the map just before going down to eat. There was something James had to take care of, so he didn't return to the Gryffindor tower with the others.<p>

Lily strolled up to the three remaining friends. "Are you guys finished with your . . . whatever that thing is yet?"

Sirius groaned. "I should've known Prongs would tell her."

Lily looked smug until Remus told him, "He didn't really. Lily saw it, but we haven't told her what it is yet. We promised her she could have first try once we were finished."

"You don't have to talk about me as if I wasn't here," Lily snapped. "Did you finish it or what?"

"We're done," Sirius told her. He handed the map to her.

Lily turned the parchment over in her hand. "What is it?" she asked, puzzled.

Peter opened his mouth to tell her, but Sirius cut him off. "Can't you tell?"

"If I could tell," Lily said, sounding as if she was explaining it to a two year old, "then I wouldn't ask."

"Well, then," Sirius said. "You'll just have to figure it out yourself."

Lily shot him a dirty look. She could, of course, wait for James to come back and simply ask him. But she was a prefect, and stubborn to the boot as well. Sirius had challenged her and there was no way she was going to back down.

Taking out her wand, she tapped the parchment, saying, "_Secreti evulga!_"

At first nothing happened. The disappointment was apparent on both Lily's and Sirius' faces, although for different reasons. Then the Insulting Charm kicked in. The amazement on everyone's face soon faded, leaving Lily with fury, Sirius with delight and Peter - well, Peter with less amazement.

"It works!" crowed Sirius.

"This is what the big secret was?" Lily asked. "A piece of paper that

insults people? How puerile. I thought it was something worthwhile."

"Oh," Sirius quickly said, "it is." His eyes gained a mischievous glint and he grinned wickedly at James' girlfriend.

"Why do I suddenly get the feeling you're up to no good?" Lily asked rhetorically.

Sirius put his right hand over his heart. "My dear Lily," he said dramatically, "I solemnly swear that I am up to no good."

Lily snorted. "That's not hard to believe," she said. Then she gasped. The paper now read:

_Messrs Moony, Wormtail, Padfoot and Prongs
>Purveyors of Aids to Magical Mischief-Makers
are proud to present
>THE MARAUDER'S MAP

"What is this?" Lily asked, her eyes wide.

"The Marauder's Map," Sirius said proudly. "Courtesy of yours truly. With help of a few friends, of course."

Remus rolled his eyes, an action that was mirrored in Lily.

"You signed it?" Lily asked.

"Of course," answered Sirius.

"That wasn't too smart, now, was it. I mean, now everyone will know who wrote this. Including the teachers. If any of them get their hands on it, you four will be in a lot of trouble."

"That's the beauty of it," Sirius explained. "No teachers will even know what it is, because they won't know the phrase to activate it. Besides, it's not like we used our real names."

"But you used your nicknames," Lily exclaimed, exasperated. "The whole school knows them."

"The whole school doesn't know," Sirius corrected. "Very few people know us by our nicknames."

"Our entire year does," Lily retorted.

Remus broke in before the two could start fighting in earnest. "The teachers don't know, and they're the ones who count."

The dot marked 'James Potter' was now approaching the Gryffindor tower. Sure enough, seconds later, James came through the picture of the Fat Lady. He came up to the group and spied the Marauder's Map, still in Lily's hand.

"Does it work then?" he asked, excited.

"It works, Prongs," Sirius replied, a huge smile across his face. He wasn't the only one smiling, either. Everyone, James, Peter, Remus, and even Lily, were grinning wildly.

"We're going to have some fun with this," Sirius promised.

The End

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End
file.